

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 EUR-25 L-03 H-03 EB-11

COME-00 TRSE-00 SS-20 NSC-07 PRS-01 INR-10 CIAE-00

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P 270800Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6117

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0401

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, MA

SUBJ: W/W REPPAS

REF: TANANARIVE 0395

FOR: SCS

1. NORMAL CONS VISIT TO REPPAS TOOK PLACE 26MAR. MAITRE LEBEL ALSO PRESENT DURING FIRST TEN MINUTES OF MEETING. LEBEL HAD TOLD REPPAS MAJOR POINTS OF 25MAR MEETING WITH AMB (REFTEL) WITHOUT BEING OVERLY OPTIMISTIC. LEBEL ALSO TOLD CONSOFF THAT, IF FOR SOME REASON EMBASSY FELT THAT APPROACHES TO GOMR BY IT MIGHT NOT BE SUCCESSFUL, APPROACH THROUGH AMB RAHARIJAONA IN WASH COULD BE USEFUL ALTERNATIVE. RAHARIJAONA, LEBEL POINTED OUT, WAS EMINENT MALAGASY JURIST WITH CONSIDERABLE CONNECTIONS IN MIN JUSTICE. IF USG EFFORTS FAILED, LEBEL STATED THAT HE WOULD STILL ASK FOR CLEMENCY FROM HEAD OF GOVT BEFORE WAITING FOR HALF OF SENTENCE SERVED.

2. REPPAS' PHYSICAL CONDITION NOTICEABLY WORSE. PRISONER HAS LOST WEIGHT AND IS GHOSTLY WHITE. MENTALLY, HOWEVER, HE SEEMED IN GOOD SPIRITS. WHEN ASKED IF HE HAD ANY OBJECTION TO USG REQUEST FOR EXPULSION, HE SAID NO. CONSOFF REMINDED HIM THAT EXPULSION UNDOUBTEDLY EXCLUDED ANY PROSPECT OF HIS RETURN TO PROTECT FINANCIAL INTERESTS. REPPAS FELT THAT, WITH MONUMENTAL

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FINE, ANY TANGIBLE ASSETS OR CLAIMS HE MIGHT HAVE IN MADAGASCAR

WOULD BE TAKEN OVER BY GOMR. EXPULSION SHOULD BE PURSUED "VIG-OROUSLY", REPPAS STATED.

3. FYI: AFTER LEBEL LEFT, REPPAS ELABORATED "PAPILLON" STYLE ESCAPE PLAN. BRIBE TO PRISON DOCTOR AND CLANDESTINE FLIGHT TO COMORO ISLANDS KEY ELEMENTS OF PLOT WHICH WOULD BE DONE WITH FELLOW FRENCH PRISONER. CONSOFF WARNED REPPAS THAT THIS COULD EASILY BE TRAP TO CAUSE HIM FURTHER DIFFICULTIES AND THAT HE COULD BE KILLED IN ATTEMPTED ESCAPE. REPPAS REASSURED CONSOFF THIS PLAN WOULD BE USED ONLY IF ALL ELSE FAILED. END FYI.

4. THROUGHOUT MEETING CONSOFF REINFORCED IDEA THAT LOOSE TALK OR INDEED (UNDERLINE) ANY (ANY END UNDERLINE) TALK CONCERNING EMBASSY APPROACHES TO GOMR COULD RUIN EFFORT. REPPAS APPARENTLY CONCURRED.

5. IN COMPLETELY UNRELATED CONFERENCE BETWEEN EMBASSY ADMIN OFFICER AND PRESIDENT MALAGASY BAR ASSOCIATION RADILOFE, LATTER VOLUNTEERED COMMENT THAT GOMR WOULD, ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE, UNDOUBTEDLY EXPEL REPPAS IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS AS GESTURE OF GOOD WILL TOWARD U.S.

MENDENHALL

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